

ARCH Group's aim: "To show our love for God and You"

Weekly Notices

26th January 2025

Third Sunday of Epiphany

Today's Collect

God of all mercy, your Son proclaimed good news to the poor, release to the captives, and freedom to the oppressed: anoint us with your Holy Spirit and set all your people free to praise you in Christ our Lord.

Today's Post Communion Prayer

Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Next Week's Services: Sunday 2nd February 2025

Presentation of Christ in the Temple

8.30 am	Rous Lench	Holy Communion*
9.30 am	Harvington	Morning Service
11.00 am	Church Lench	Holy Communion+
6.30 pm	Harvington	Holy Communion*

HELP AT HOLIDAY CLUB – 18-20th FEBRUARY

I could do with help at my last Holiday Club on 18-20th February between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm. It's not arduous and may include help with craft activities, overseeing the children/young people and being 'eyes' at a couple of outdoor activities such as a walk. We will finish with a party on Thursday afternoon.

Please contact me, Richard Thorniley, if you can help

For Prayer

Let us pray to the Lord, asking for the help we need to live the good news in a broken world. Even though answering the call to justice and to peace asks for all we have; even though life and its demands consume much of our energy; even though we are anxious about the future: the joy of the Lord is our strength.

With confidence we pray: **send us, lead us, and fill us with your Spirit.**

Even though living for you at home, at school and at work is often challenging; even though standing up for what we believe in a sceptical world is tough; even though we fall short of what you ask of us and we let people down: the joy of the Lord is our strength.

With confidence we pray: **send us, lead us, and fill us with your Spirit.**

Even though the world is troubled and building the kingdom relies on our small offering of faith; even though peace is so fragile and hope is hard to come by – remembering especially the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and the West Bank where fresh violence has broken out; even though we often lose our way and fail to listen, we can begin again: the joy of the Lord is our strength.

With confidence we pray: **send us, lead us, and fill us with your Spirit.**

Even though in the UK the threats of extremism and radicalisation are rising and the surge of online violence seems unstoppable; even though we are far from the inclusive and equal society that enables everyone to flourish; even though good news for the poor and freedom and healing for all will require our time, love, persistence and practical compassion: the joy of the Lord is our strength.

With confidence we pray: **send us, lead us, and fill us with your Spirit.**

Even though we feel small and insignificant, the good news is for us to share; even though the need around us is great; our hands are empty and our courage fails; even though the gifts we offer seem inadequate: the joy of the Lord is our strength.

With confidence we pray: **send us, lead us, and fill us with your Spirit.**

This Week's First Reading: *Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10*

¹All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ²Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

⁵And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen,' lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

⁸So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'

This Week's Psalm: *Psalm 19:1-6*

- 1 The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
- 2 One day pours out its song to another and one night unfolds knowledge to another.
- 3 They have neither speech nor language and their voices are not heard,
- 4 Yet their sound has gone out into all lands and their words to the ends of the world.
- 5 In them has he set a tabernacle for the sun, that comes forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber and rejoices as a champion to run his course.
- 6 It goes forth from the end of the heavens and runs to the very end again, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

This Week's Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 12:12-31a*

¹²Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot would say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear would say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a continued

members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' ²²On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, ²⁵that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But strive for the greater gifts.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *Luke 4:14-21*

¹⁴Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

Luke 4:14-21 continued

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: ¹⁸‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’ ²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

Next Week’s First Reading: *Malachi 3:1-5*

Thus says the Lord God: ¹See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

Next Week's Psalm: *Psalm 24:1-10*

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it, the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For he has founded it upon the seas and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, or who can rise up in his holy place?'
- 4 'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, who have not lifted up their soul to an idol, nor sworn an oath to a lie;
- 5 'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a just reward from the God of their salvation.'
- 6 Such is the company of those who seek him, of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 'Who is the King of glory?' 'The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord who is mighty in battle.'
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 'Who is this King of glory?' 'The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.'

Next Week's Second Reading: *Hebrews 2:14-18*

¹⁴Since the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Next Week's Gospel Reading: *Luke 2:22-40*

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.